

**CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSLATION COMPETENCE: RESULTS OF
THE PACTE GROUP’S EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH**

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INTRODUCTION

I.- RESULTS OF DEPENDENT VARIABLES

1. Acceptability: transversal indicator
2. ‘Knowledge about translation’ variable
 1. Dynamic index
 2. Coherence coefficient
3. ‘Translation project’ variable
 1. Dynamic index of overall TP
 2. Dynamic index of TP of each Rich Point
 3. Coherence coefficientAcceptability
4. ‘Dynamic translation index’: Knowledge about translation and Translation project
5. ‘Identification and solution of translation problems’ variable
 1. Coefficient of perception of the overall difficulty of the translation of the text
 2. Identification of prototypical translation problems
 3. Characterisation of prototypical translation problems
 4. Coefficient of satisfactionAcceptability

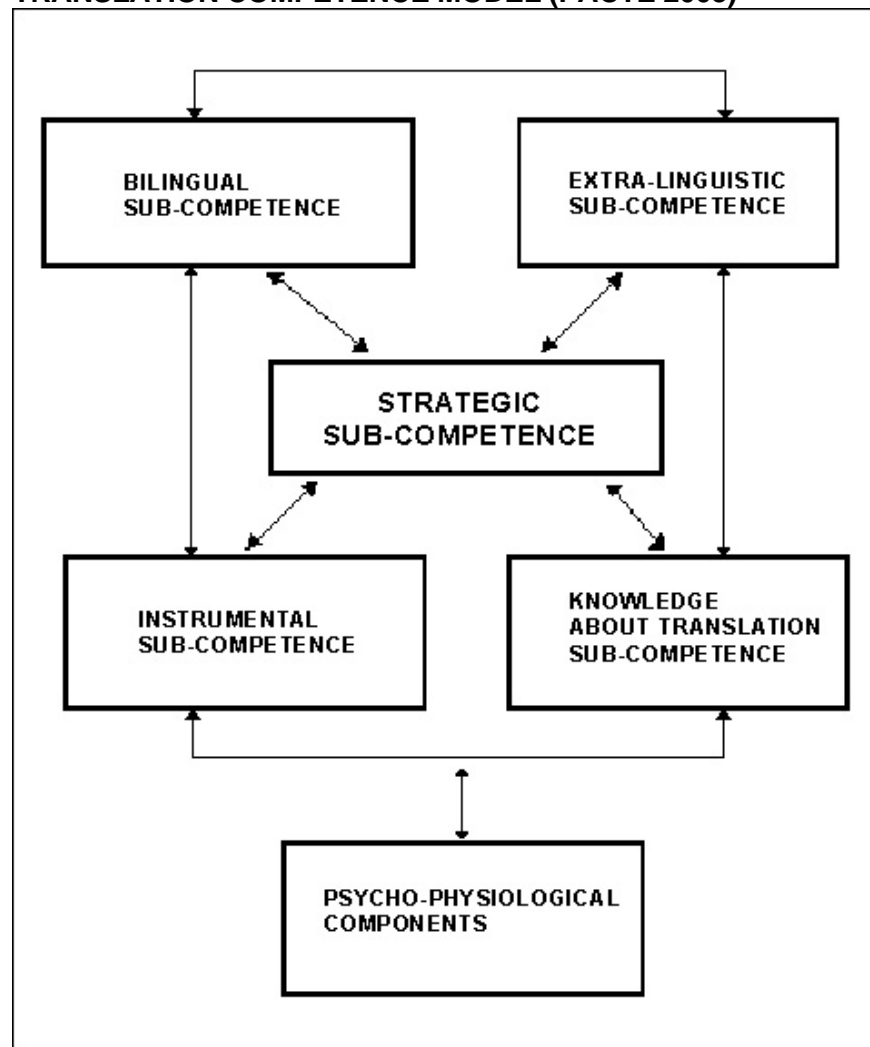
6. ‘Decision-making’ variable
 1. Sequences of actions
 2. Type of internal supportAcceptability
7. ‘Efficacy of the translation process’ variable
 1. Total time taken
 2. Time taken at each stageAcceptability
8. ‘Use of instrumental resources’ variable
 1. Time spent on searches (total and on each stage)
 2. Number of searches
 3. Number of resources
 4. Variety of searchesAcceptability
9. ‘Top 9 translators’: confirmation of results

II.- ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSLATION COMPETENCE CORPUS RESULTING FROM THE EXPERIMENT

1. Corpus description
2. Bases for comparison between components
3. Results

III.- CONCLUSIONS: CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSLATION COMPETENCE

TRANSLATION COMPETENCE MODEL (PACTE 2003)



TRANSLATION COMPETENCE: Translation competence is the underlying system of declarative and predominantly procedural knowledge required to translate. It comprises a number of interrelated sub-competences.

Bilingual sub-competence. Predominantly procedural knowledge required to communicate in two languages. It comprises pragmatic, socio-linguistic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge.

Extra-linguistic sub-competence. Predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about the world in general, and field-specific. It comprises bicultural, encyclopaedic, and subject knowledge.

Knowledge about translation sub-competence. Predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about translation and aspects of the profession. It comprises knowledge about how translation functions (translation units, processes required, methods and procedures used and types of problems); and knowledge about professional translation practice (the work market, types of translation briefs, target audiences, etc.)¹.

Instrumental sub-competence. Predominantly procedural knowledge related to the use of documentation resources and information and communication technologies applied to translation (dictionaries of all kinds, encyclopaedias, grammars, style books, parallel texts, electronic corpora, search engines, etc.)

Strategic sub-competence. Procedural knowledge to guarantee the efficiency of the translation process and solve problems encountered. This is an essential sub-competence that affects all the others since it creates links between the different sub-competences as it controls the translation process. Its function is to plan the process and carry out the translation project (selecting the most appropriate method); evaluate the process and the partial results obtained in relation to the final purpose; activate the different sub-competences and compensate for any shortcomings; identify translation problems and apply procedures to solve them.

Psycho-physiological components. Different types of cognitive and attitudinal components and psycho-motor mechanisms. They include: cognitive components such as memory, perception, attention and emotion; attitudinal aspects such as intellectual curiosity, perseverance, rigour, critical spirit, knowledge about and confidence in one's own abilities, the ability to measure one's own abilities, motivation, etc.; abilities such as creativity, logical reasoning, analysis and synthesis, etc.

¹ Other aspects involved are knowledge about translation associations, tariffs, taxes, etc.

**DEPENDENT VARIABLES
(adapted from PACTE 2005a, 2005b)**

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TRANSLATION Related to the knowledge about translation sub-competence	
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	The subject's implicit knowledge about the principles of translation and aspects of the translation profession
INDICATORS	Dynamic index and coherence coefficient
INSTRUMENTS	Questionnaire on knowledge about translation
TRANSLATION PROJECT Related to the strategic sub-competence	
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	The subject's approach to the translation of a specific text and of the units it comprises
INDICATORS	Dynamic index in the overall translation project and that of each Rich Point; coherence between the overall translation project and that of each Rich Point; acceptability
INSTRUMENTS	Translation problems questionnaire and retrospective interview
IDENTIFICATION AND SOLUTION OF TRANSLATION PROBLEMS Related to the strategic sub-competence and the knowledge about translation sub-competence	
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	Difficulties encountered by the subjects when carrying out a translation task
INDICATORS	Coefficient of perception of the overall difficulty of the translation of the text; identification of prototypical translation problems; characterisation of prototypical translation problems; coefficient of satisfaction; acceptability
INSTRUMENTS	Translation problems questionnaire and retrospective interview

DECISION-MAKING Related to strategic and instrumental sub-competences	
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	Decisions made during the translation process which involve the use of automatized and non-automatized cognitive resources (internal support) and the use of different sources of documentation (external support) (Alves, 1995, 1997)
INDICATORS	Sequences of actions; type of internal support; acceptability
INSTRUMENTS	Translations, direct observation charts, PROXY and Camtasia recordings
EFFICACY OF THE TRANSLATION PROCESS Related to the strategic sub-competence	
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	Optimum relationship between time taken to complete a translation task and the acceptability of the solution
INDICATORS	Total time taken; time taken at each stage of the translation process (orientation, development, revision); acceptability.
INSTRUMENTS	Translations, direct observation chart, PROXY and Camtasia recordings
USE OF INSTRUMENTAL RESOURCES Related to the instrumental competence	
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	Strategies used when consulting documentary resources in electronic format (websites, dictionaries and encyclopaedias in CD-ROM)
INDICATORS	Time spent on searches (total and on each stage); number of searches; number of resources; variety of searches; acceptability
INSTRUMENTS	PROXY and Camtasia recordings, Catalogue of searches

RICH POINTS: DIRECT TRANSLATION

(English language source text)

1 Email virus strikes in new form

Computer users were warned last night to be on the lookout for an email virus that can steal confidential information and allow hackers to take control of infected machines. The virus, a new variant of the BugBear email worm that infected tens of thousands of computers around the world last October, began to spread rapidly from Australia to Europe and the USA at around 8am yesterday. According to MessageLabs, a **5Cheltenham-based virus filtering firm** which reported about 30,000 infected messages in 115 countries, the **3propagation rate** of BugBear.B almost **3doubled** every hour throughout the morning. There was also a huge **3surge** as US users came online. Like its predecessor, the variant spreads by sending itself as an attachment to every address in an infected machine's email address book. To disguise where it came from, it uses different subject headings. As well as searching for anti-virus software and disabling it, BugBear.B installs a **2keylogger** to record what the user types, which may allow hackers to record confidential information such as credit card details and passwords. It also installs a **4"Trojan horse" program which could allow a hacker to take remote control of infected machines**. [...]

The Guardian - Friday, June 6, 2003

RP1: The title (problem type: intentionality and textual)

- *Wurm in der Leitung*

- *Bugbear.b, le virus informatique qui lit par-dessus l'épaule de ses victimes*

RP2: A technical term (problem type: linguistic problem of re-expression and extralinguistic)

- *Download-Verzeichnis*

- *Édition de logiciels antivirus*

RP3: Reference (problem type: textual)

- *Schädling / E-Mail Würmer / Vorgängervariante*

- *Le ver / résurgence / ses congénères*

RP4: Elements in apposition (problem type: textual and intentionality)

- *Dateien-Tauchbörse Kazaa*

- *Soumissions, des communications du virus*

RP5: A particularly rich point (problem type: intentionality; linguistic problem of re-expression)

- *Tastatureingaben von PC-Nutzern nach Kreditkartennummern und Ähnlichem überwacht*

- *Enregistrer les caractères tapés sur le clavier*

INVERSE TRANSLATION

La Plana Novella

La Plana Novella es una antigua heredad adquirida por el **1Indiano** Pere Domenech i Grau en 1885 que se encuentra en una pequeña planicie en el centro del Parc Natural del Garraf y pertenece al municipio de Olivella. La Finca fue declarada colonia agrícola 10 años más tarde por el **2gobierno alfonsino**, pero de aquella época perdura una leyenda de **3desenfreno y dilapidación** que hizo desaparecer la **1fortuna del americano**. El estilo arquitectónico del Palacete es ecléctico, es decir que mezcla diferentes estilos. **4La geografía comarcal de Cataluña** lo califica de "Castillo de Bambalinas" como si fuese un decorado de teatro. Sin ningún tipo de duda la construcción estilísticamente más original de Palau Novella es el lavadero gaudiniano, pero una de las piezas más características y llamativas del Palau es el **5común**, conocido como **5"la trona"**.



<http://www.laplananovella>.

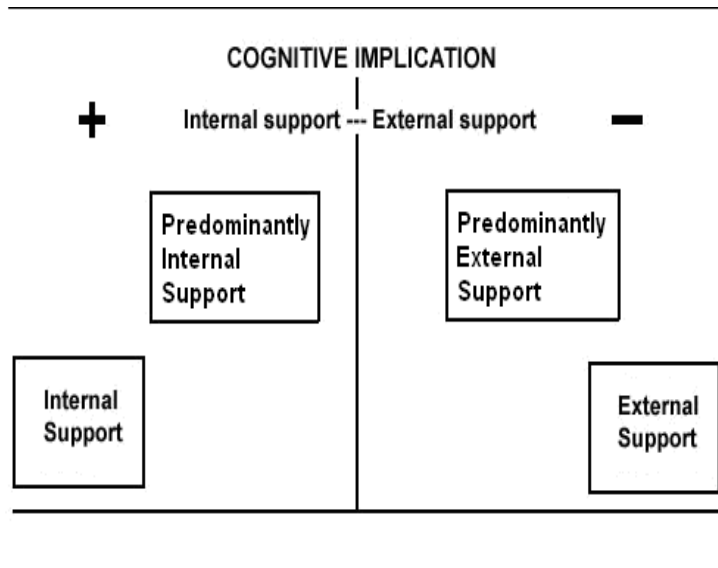
RP1: *El Indiano... la fortuna del americano* (problem type: extralinguistic and textual)

RP2: *gobierno alfonsino* (problem type: extralinguistic)

RP3: *desenfreno y dilapidación* (problem type: linguistic problem of re-expression)

RP4: *la geografía comarcal de Cataluña* (problem type: intentionality)

RP5: *común ... trona* (problem type: extralinguistic, textual and intentionality).



PACTE (2005a, 2005b, 2007a, 2007b, 2009)

INTERNAL SUPPORT (IS): the Definitive Solution is based exclusively on internal support, with no consultation prior to the Definitive Solution being adopted. Example: Definitive Solution; Provisional Solution → Definitive Solution

PREDOMINANTLY INTERNAL SUPPORT (PIS): the Definitive Solution is based predominantly on internal support, i.e. any combination of consultations which does not include a consultation of bilingual resources from which the variant offered is adopted in translation. Example: Provisional Solution → Consultation of Alternative Resources → Consultation of Alternative Resources → Consultation of Bilingual Resources (but the variant is not adopted in the translation) → Definitive Solution

PREDOMINANTLY EXTERNAL SUPPORT (PES): the Definitive Solution is based predominantly on external support, i.e., any combination of consultations that includes consultations of bilingual resources from which the variant offered is adopted in translation. Example: Provisional Solution → Consultation of Alternative Resources → Consultation of Alternative Resources → Consultation of Bilingual Resources (and the variant offered is adopted in the translation) → Definitive Solution

EXTERNAL SUPPORT (ES): the Definitive Solution is based exclusively on consultation of bilingual resources, from which the variant offered is accepted in the translation. Example: Consultation in Bilingual Resources (and the variant offered adopted in translation) → Definitive Solution

QUESTIONNAIRE ON TRANSLATION PROBLEMS (PACTE 2007b, 2011a, 2011b)

1. How difficult do you think this text is to translate?

On the scale between 'very easy' and 'very difficult', put a cross on the line of squares below to show how difficult you think it would be to translate this text.

Translation of this text is very easy Translation of this text is very difficult

2. What are the general characteristics of the text that make you think so?

3. What were your priorities when translating the text?

4. What were the main problems you found when translating this text? Name 5 and answer the following questions about each.

Problem 1: 	Why was it a problem?
	What were your priorities when solving it?
	Explain as clearly as possible what you did to solve it
	Are you satisfied with the solution? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Why?

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